

INDEX
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INDEX

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☞ Part of page 8, and the whole of pages 8* and 8†, appended to this, are additional to the Third Edition of Dr. Livingstone's Journal.

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felt by the villagers in all public questions, and they furnished a proof that the possession of the means of education did not render them an unsafe portion of the population. They felt kindly towards each other, and much respected those of the neighbouring gentry who, like the late Lord Douglas, placed some confidence in their sense of honour. Through the kindness of that nobleman, the poorest among us could stroll at pleasure over the ancient domains of Bothwell, and other spots hallowed by the venerable associations of which our school-books and local traditions made us well aware ; and few of us could view the dear memorials of the past without feeling that these carefully kept monuments were our own. The masses of the working people of Scotland have read history, and are no revolutionary levellers. They rejoice in the memories of “ Wallace and Bruce and a’ the lave,” who are still much revered as the former champions of freedom. And while foreigners imagine that we want the spirit only to overturn capitalists and aristocracy, we are content to respect our laws till we can change them, and hate those stupid revolutions which might sweep away time-honoured institutions, dear alike to rich and poor.

Having finished the medical curriculum and presented a thesis on a subject which required the use of the stethoscope for its diagnosis, I unwittingly procured for myself an examination rather more severe and prolonged than usual among examining bodies. The reason was, that between me and the examiners a slight difference of opinion existed as to whether this instrument could do what was asserted. The wiser plan would have been to have had no opinion of my own. However, I was admitted a Licentiate of Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons. It was with unfeigned delight I became a member of a profession which is pre-eminently devoted to practical benevolence, and which with unwearyed energy pursues from age to age its endeavours to lessen human woe.

But though now qualified for my original plan, the opium war thing of fits and starts ; for if you do not, temptation and other things will get the better of you : ” and Thomas Burke, an old Forty-second Peninsula soldier, who has been incessant and never weary in good works for about forty years. I was delighted to find him still alive : men like these are an honour to their country and profession.

was then raging, and it was deemed inexpedient for me to proceed to China. I had fondly hoped to have gained access to that then closed empire by means of the healing art; but there being no prospect of an early peace with the Chinese, and as another inviting field was opening out through the labours of Mr. Moffat, I was induced to turn my thoughts to Africa; and after a more extended course of theological training in England than I had enjoyed in Glasgow, I embarked for Africa in 1840, and, after a voyage of three months, reached Cape Town. Spending but a short time there, I started for the interior by going round to Algoa Bay, and soon proceeded inland to the mission station in the Bechuana country, called Kuruman, which is about seven hundred miles from Cape Town. This had been established, nearly thirty years before, by Messrs. Hamilton and Moffat, and may be considered the most southern point of the real missionary field on that side of the country. It is an interesting spot on many accounts. The mission-houses and church are built of stone. The gardens, irrigated by the Kuruman rivulet, are well stocked with fruit-trees and vines, and yield European vegetables and grain readily. The pleasantness of the place is enhanced by the contrast it presents to the surrounding scenery, and the fact that it owes all its beauty to the manual labour of the missionaries. Externally it presents a picture of civilised comfort to the adjacent tribes; and by its printing-press, worked by the original founders of the mission, and also by several younger men who have entered into their labours, the light of Christianity is gradually diffused in the surrounding region. This oasis became doubly interesting to me, from something like a practical exposition of the text, Mark x. 29; for after nearly four years of African life as a bachelor, Mr. Moffat having returned from a visit to England in 1843, I screwed up courage to put a question beneath one of the fruit-trees, which, I believe, is generally accompanied by a peculiar thrilling sensation in the bosom, and which those who have never felt it can no more explain than the blind man did who thought that scarlet colour was like the sound of a trumpet, and I became united in marriage to his eldest daughter, Mary, in 1844. For a man to say much about his wife would not only be distasteful to the public, but, as it is in this case, decidedly disagreeable to herself. Having been born

in the country, and being expert in household matters, she was always the best spoke in the wheel at home; and when, in order to save time, I took her with me on two occasions to Lake Ngami, and far beyond, she actually went farther, and endured more, than some who have written large books of travels. In process of time our solitude was cheered by three boys and a girl, and, I think it useful to mention that, we never had the least difficulty in teaching them to speak English. We made it a rule to speak together always in our own tongue, and a law that the children should address us in no other. It was surprising to observe how seldom we had to remind them of the law. They never attempted to address us in the native tongue, though they spoke both it and English perfectly. From our experience, the spectacle of a missionary's children speaking only the native language ought never to be seen. When they went on board ship they refused to say another word of the native language, and now have lost it entirely.

In consequence of droughts, which will be described in their proper place, we were mainly dependent for supplies of proper food on Kuruman, and were often indebted to the fruit-trees there and to Mrs. Moffat's kind foresight for the continuance of good health. It ought to be known that, when visitors arrive at most mission stations, the best of everything is provided for them freely; but having heard that some graceless fellows, who had been feasted gratuitously, went back to the colony, saying, "These missionaries live like fighting cocks," we never made any change in our fare for even our friends.

If the reader bears in mind that from 1840 to 1845 I was employed in preparatory labours and associated with other missionaries at Kuruman and Mabotsa; then from 1845 to 1849 continued to work at Chonuane and Kolobeng, aided only by Mrs. Livingstone and two native teachers; that in 1849 the journey to discover Lake Ngami was undertaken; and that in the following pages a sketch of our labours at Kolobeng is given, as well as an account of the journey to Lake Ngami, and finally the last great journey which occupied the years 1852-6 detailed,—he will have a clear idea of the arrangement of this book. Speaking generally, I have spent sixteen years of my

life, namely, from 1840 to 1856, in medical and missionary labours in Africa without cost to the inhabitants.

As to those literary qualifications which are acquired by habits of writing, and which are so important to an author, my African life has not only not been favourable to the growth of such accomplishments, but quite the reverse: it has made composition irksome and laborious. I think I would rather cross the African continent again than undertake to write another book. It is far easier to travel than to write about it. I intended on going to Africa to continue my studies; but as I could not brook the idea of simply entering into other men's labours made ready to my hands, I entailed on myself, in addition to teaching, manual labour in building and other handicraft work, which made me generally as much exhausted and unfit for study in the evenings as ever I had been when a cotton-spinner. The want of time for self-improvement was the only source of regret that I experienced during my African career. The reader remembering this will make allowances for the mere gropings for light of a student who has the vanity to think himself "not yet too old to learn." More precise information on several subjects has necessarily been omitted in a popular work like the present; but I hope to give such details to the scientific reader through some other channel.





